

Contact: Micah Swafford  
Cong. Istook's Office  
202-225-2132

Yvonne Anderson  
ACOG  
405-234-2264

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## Alternative Fuel Coming to Central Oklahoma

*Oklahoma City & Washington, D.C.* – The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) will soon be the driving force behind Central Oklahoma's first ethanol fueling sites thanks to funding included by Congressman Ernest Istook (R-OK) in the FY 2003 Omnibus Appropriations bill. Istook allotted \$150,000 for ACOG's alternative fuel facilities project in the appropriations bill that passed the U.S. Congress and was signed into law by the President late last week. The Omnibus Appropriations bill is a compilation of 11 appropriation bills providing critical funding for government services for the 2003 fiscal year.

**“Like the rest of the country, it's tough for our area to comply with complex federal environmental standards. This will help central Oklahoma to make those adjustments,”** said Istook.

ACOG's Clean Cities program and its stakeholders have been working to bring ethanol fueling facilities to Oklahoma for more than two years. Zach Taylor, ACOG's executive director, said the availability of funding will now allow AGOG to issue a request for proposals for the installation of E85 pumps in several retail locations around the region.

E85 is a fuel blend of 85% denatured ethanol and 15% gasoline. It can be used in light-duty vehicles such as cars, pickup trucks and SUVs that are manufactured as E85-compatible or flex-fuel vehicles (FFVs). Central Oklahoma has more than 11,000 FFVs on its roadways and more than 40,000 throughout the state. In fact, many Oklahomans are driving these vehicles and may not even be aware of their alternative fuel capabilities.

Ethanol is a naturally oxygenated, domestic, renewable fuel produced by fermenting organic materials such as corn, grains, crop waste materials, and forestry waste materials. Significant benefits of ethanol include reducing the country's dependence on foreign oil and providing alternative markets for America's farmers. Vehicles running on ethanol emit fewer pollutants and toxic chemicals that contribute to smog and are also implicated in global warming.

All major domestic automakers offer FFVs at prices comparable to conventional gasoline vehicles. These cars and trucks can fuel with gasoline or any blend of gasoline and ethanol up to 85% ethanol and as little as 15% gasoline. U.S. Department of Energy figures indicate more than one million light-duty E85 vehicles are currently in operation across the nation.

ACOG expects five to seven E85 refueling pumps to be operating at retail locations in Central Oklahoma within the next year. The pumps will be owned and operated by fuel retailers. Installation costs will be defrayed by funding provided to ACOG in the Omnibus Appropriations bill through Istook's efforts.

*ACOG's Clean Cities program is a U.S. Department of Energy initiative. It is a voluntary, locally based government/private industry partnership whose goal is to expand the use of alternatives to gasoline and diesel fuel, accelerate the deployment of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs) and build a local AFV fueling infrastructure. Clean Cities supports the Energy Policy Act of 1992 and the Clean Air Act and its 1990 Amendments, seeks to reduce national dependence on imported oil, and promotes the creation of commercial opportunities, new jobs and new businesses in the alternative fuels industry.*